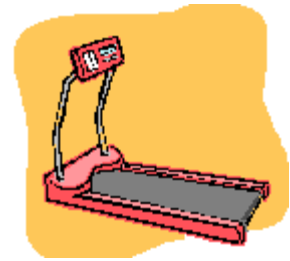


Squabbling Over Who Can Use the Treadmill - A Fight Worth Having!

As a young adult I struggled with a tendency to be overweight, but after settling down in a happy marriage and three children later I was beginning to suffer the ravages of inactivity and obesity: gallbladder surgery and a fatty liver. My husband, bless his heart, never once complained to me that I was getting too heavy, in spite of the obviousness of it and my apparent obliviousness. He would simply, gently say he just wanted me to be healthy. My fatty liver began to cause chronic upper right quadrant pain and although it sounds cliché, I decided on New Year's Eve 2006 to turn things around, lose weight and get healthy.



Although it is horrifying to admit, in March 2006 I was tipping the scales at 244 and I am SHORT! This qualified me as morbidly obese. By New Year's Eve, I was still an impressive 239 pounds. The scale and I were not on good terms. I needed to lose over 100 pounds. What a daunting task!

I began with an Atkins/South Beachy-type of diet and in the first three weeks I lost 17 pounds. What a great way to get motivated! I stuck with that approach for awhile and then eased into Weight Watchers. However, it seems really silly to pay someone else for my own efforts to lose weight so I stopped going. I do miss the community of other weight battlers but that 40 dollars a month could be spent at a health club instead! By June 2007 I had lost about 50 pounds following a weight watchers-like approach, but during vacation I began to get a little complacent and I came back 1 pound heavier. There I stayed until another pound or two crept back on. This wasn't a plateau, this was the beginning of a weight re-bound. I should know--I have made a veritable career out of yo-yo dieting. My mom should have named me Duncan (course I'm a girl, but it works also for my loyalty to Duncan Heinz cake mixes).

So recognizing this wrong-way trend, I decided that I had exhausted my excuses for not working out. Actually, I really had no excuses other than the same old whiny "But-I-work-full-time-and-have-three-kids excuse". I was just being lazy, pure and simple. The kids aren't babies anymore and Dad is perfectly capable of running the show for an hour or so while I work out... Anyway, the first day of walking on our old treadmill, I did 12 minutes and I was pooped! Wow, I had no idea I was so wretchedly out of shape! Never mind, I did it again the next day and the next. I'm happy to report that my endurance and stamina rebounded very quickly. **Soon I was walking 4-5 miles a day** and my husband and I would squabble over who could use the treadmill. Now that's a fight worth having!



Luckily for us, our washing machine gave up the ghost and while shopping for a new machine I "threw" in an Nordic Track elliptical machine to the bill. (Gotta love 1 year same as cash!) I do a 15-20 minute program every morning before work and I vary what I can get in at night, but generally it's safe to say I get a half hour in each night. My aim is to try to burn 1,000 calories a day. Sometimes it works out, sometimes it doesn't. But hey, **I'm down to 182 pounds from 244, and the scale is headed south again and I've lost ten inches in my waist** since the new year. I've incorporated some sporadic mild resistance work-outs into my regimen but I'm looking into getting more serious about that soon.

I now eat "normal" which simply means I don't pig-out, and I avoid the foods that any non-rocket scientist knows are bad (sugar, fast-food, chips); thank goodness I was never into ice cream that much).

I know I have a long way to go, but it has been so worth the effort! I'm happy that my chronic upper right quadrant pain is gone. I am no longer the fattest woman I see around; and joy of joys I can shop at stores other than Lane Bryant and CJ Banks. Not long ago, I cried after buying a "normal" size top from Sears. So, I just keep plugging away using my elliptical machine and finally, FINALLY, I'm taking full responsibility for my own health and well-being. All my work-out equipment is at home so I have no excuse for not working out. I need to lose at least another 50 pounds and if it takes me another 2 years to get there, so be it.

Submitted by a DEQ employee